Start of Bertram H. Kornfeld Collection

AR 11659

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LEO BAECK INSTITUTE
Center for Jewish History
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AR 11659 1/1 Bertram H. Kornfeld Collection, 2002

2595

THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE: 15 WEST 16TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10011, TEL (212) 744 - 6400

Name: BERTRAM (First Name) H. (Middle Name) KORNFELD (Last Name)

Occupation in US: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR
Retired since 1989

Date of Birth: FEBRUARY (Month) 8, (Day) 1(0s (Year) **Place of Birth:** VIENNA, AUSTRIA (City) (Country)

Prewar Address: LANDSTRASSE HAUPTSTRASSE 102 (Street) 3tter BEZIRK (District, if in Vienna) VIENNA, AUSTRIA (City) (Country)

Prewar Name: HANS BERTHOLD KORNFELD **Maiden Name:**

1. Education/Occupation(s) *(please if possible, indicate institutions and year when entered/left)*

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY ENTERED 1946
GRADUATED 1950 MA 1953

2. Were you affiliated with any kind of organization (Youth, Zionist, Political, etc.)? If so, did you have any specific function? NO

3. Were you arrested and/or interned? *(please indicate where and when)*

NO (TAKEN AS PRISONER OF WAR
BY THE GERMANS IN THE BATTLE OF THE
BULGE DECEMBER 1944)

4. What was your route of emigration? *(please indicate places and dates of stay)*

VIENNA TO BREMERHAVEB BY TRAIN STAYED THERE OVERNIGHT THEN
BOARDED THE SS BREMEN FOR NEW YORK

5. May we contact you again with a more detailed follow-up questionnaire? *(please circle)* (Yes) No

6. Do you have any documents, such as photographs, letters, diaries, all kinds of manuscripts, etc., that would be appropriate for the archives of the LBI? (Yes) No

If necessary please use additional sheets. Thank you!

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We kindly ask you to answer the following questions in as much detail as possible, either in English or in German. If you need more space, please feel free to use additional sheets. If you don't know the answer to certain questions or don't want to answer for any reason, just go on to the next question.

NAME: BERTRAM H.KORNFELD **DATE:** 3/31/02

1. BEFORE MARCH 1938

1.1 Please describe your parental home.

(Did you live in an apartment or in a house? How many people lived there with you? Did you have servants? What language(s) were spoken in the household?)

MY MOTHER,SISTER AND I LIVED IN AN APARTMENT, SPOKE GERMAN AND, IN SPITE OF GREAT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES ,HAD A SERVANT FOR CLEANING AND LAUNDRY. After my father died in 1935 I HEARD MANY DISCUSSIONS OF US MOVING IN WITH MY GRANDFATHER. HOWEVER, RATHER THAN HAVE THE CHILDREN MOVE AND STRAT IN A NEW SCHOOL MY GRANDFATHER MOVED IN WITH US. MY UNCLE, A WELL TO DO BUSINESSMAN VISITED VIENNA PERIODICALLY AND ALWAYS STAYED WITH US. I suspect he contributed generously for his stay which must have helped us pay the rent.

1.2 Please tell us about your neighborhood (District in Vienna or area).

(What ethnic groups lived there? Religious life? Relationships between Jews and non-Jews? Relationships with neighbors?)

WE LIVED IN THE THIRD DISTRICT. I KNOW OF NO ETHNIC GROUPS OTHER THAN THE VIENNESE. WE OCCASONALY ATTENDED SYNAGOGUE. We DID KEEP ALL THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS. I CANNOT RECALL NEIGHBORS, BUT I ALSO DO NOT RECALL ANY PROBLEMS.

1.3 What religious tradition existed in your family?
(Did you keep kosher, go to synagogue, observe holidays, etc.?)

OCCASIONALLY ATTENDED SYNAGOGUE AND KEPT ALL THE HOLIDAYS. WE DID NOT KEEP KOSHER

1.4 Please, tell us about your friends and acquaintances ?
(Were they mostly Jewish or non-Jewish? Did you have any close non-Jewish friends?)

I ONLY REMEMBER ONE CLOSE FRIEND WHO LIVED AROUND THE CORNER. HE WAS JEWISH. I MUST HAVE HAD NON JEWISH FRIENDS SINCE THE SCHOOL I ATTENDED WAS MOSTLY NON JEWISH AND WE DID FORM A SOCCER TEAM.

1.5 Were you affiliated with any political, social or religious organization?
(Youth Organizations, Zionist Organizations, Political Parties, other organizations)
If so, did you have any specific function?

THERE WERE NO AFFILIATIONS EXCEPT THAT I BELONGED TO THE BOY SCOUTS- A NON RELIGIOUS TROOP.

1.6 Did you or your family encounter any anti-Semitism in Austria before March 1938?

(If so, please give details.)

THERE WERE MANY RUMORS ABOUT A GERMAN TAKE OVER AND I SOMEHOW REMEMBER A "GAULEITER" APPOINTED IN AUSTRIA WHOSE name was ,i believe,Seiss Inquart. IN FEBRUARY 1938 MY MOTHER SENT ME ON A THREE DAY SKI TRIP. I DO RECALL THE INSTRUCTOR MAKING ANTISEMITIC REMARKS TO ME AND TEACHING ME ALL WRONG METHODS OF HANDLING SKIS. MY MOTHER DID FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE JEWISH COUNCIL OF VIENNA BUT THEY WERE IN NO POSITION TO DO ANYTHING, PARTICULARLY SINCE THIS WAS THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE"" ANSCHLUSS".

1.7 What was your/ your family's reaction to Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933 and to Nazi activity in Austria in the early thirties? Did you/ they feel threatened by these events?

AUSTRIA's INSTABILITY AND CIVIL WAR WERE OBVIOUSLY RELATED TO AND SUPPORTED BY GERMANY BUT THERE WAS NO PERSONAL THREAT EXCEPT TO STAY INDOORS WHEN SHOOTING OCCURRED. IN DECEMBER OF 1937 I WAS IN A CHANNUKAH PLAY WHICH WAS DIRECTED BY A WOMAN WHO HAD JUST COME FROM BERLIN. IN THE MIDDLE OF ONE REHEARSAL SHE BROKE DOWN IN TEARS. WHEN I TOLD MY MOTHER OF THE INCIDENT SHE SAID THAT THE LADY MUST HAVE HAD A DIFFICULT TIME IN BERLIN.

2. FROM MARCH 1938 TO EMIGRATION - FROM EUROPE TO AMERICA

2.1 How was your time spent during and after the "Anschluss"? What was the impact of the "Anschluss" on you personally?

(Were you expelled from school/university? Did you or somebody in your family lose your/ their jobs? Were your apartments/houses looted? Were you (or members of your family) persecuted? Were you/ they forced to scrub the streets?)

I BELIEVE THAT I FINISHED THE SCHOOL YEAR AND EVEN ATTENDED BOOKBINDING CLASSES IN JUNE AND JULY. I COULD NO LONGER ATTEND THE OPERA ALTHOUGH I STILL HAVE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PERFORMANCE IN APRIL FOR WHICH I HAD A STUDENT SUBSCRIPTION TICKET WHICH,OF COURSE, WENT UNUSED. I DO RECALL SEEING LOCAL JEWISH MERCHANTS FORCED TO SCRUB THE STREET. MY MOTHER WORKED FOR AN ATTORNEY WHO SHARED HIS OFFICE WITH A DR.EHRLICH WHO WAS PRESIDENT OF AN IMPORTANT JEWISH ORGANIZATION. I BELIEVE ON MARCH 16 HE WAS FORCIBLY REMOVED FROM HIS OFFICE AND HIS ASHES WERE SENT TO HIS WIFE. OUR APARTMENT WAS NOT LOOTED UNTIL THE DAY WE LEFT VIENNA IN AUGUST 1938. I RECILLECT THAT OUR MAID AND HER NAZI OFFICER BOYFRIEND REMOVED ALL THE FURNITURE AND A BABY GRAND PIANO. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT MY MOTHER SHREWDLY PROMISED THE FURNITURE TO THE MAIND IN RETURN FOR LETTING US LIVE IN RELATIVE PEACE.

2.2 How did non-Jewish friends, colleagues, schoolmates, neighbors, etc. behave toward you and your family?

I CANNOT RECALL ANY NEGATIVE INCIDENTS. A FEW NEIGHBORS DID COME TO WISH US WELL IN THE NEW WORLD.

2.3 Could you please decribe your recollections of November 9th, 1938, the so-called „Reichs-Kristallnacht" (in case you still were in Austria at that time)

SINCE WE LEFT IN AUGUST WE FOUND OUT ABOUT KRISTALLNACHT THROUGH THE NEWSPAPERS.

2.4 Were you or any members of your family arrested? Sent to a camp?
(If so, please give details.)

SEE THE ENCLOSED "FRIENDS AND RELATIVES KILLED DURING HITLER, WHICH MY MOTHER WROTE. . JUST IN CASE YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY READING THE ENCLOSURE THE CLOSEST RELATIVES KILLED IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS WERE AN UNCLE,TWO AUNTS AND A NUMBER OF MY MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S COUSINS.

2.5 Can you recall the process of obtaining papers necessary for emigration?
(Did you try to obtain visas for other countries as well? Were you supported by any relief organization, by relatives or friends?)

MY MOTHER IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED HER BROTHER WHO LIVED IN THE USA FOR AN AFFIDAVIT TO GET US OUT OF AUSTRIA. IT DID TAKE SOME TIME . GETTING THE NECESSARY VISA WAS EVEN MORE Difficult and i recall many very anxious days.

2.6 What happened to your (or your family's) apartments, houses, businesses and other property?

my father'S BUSINESS WENT BANKRUPT IN 1935. WE HAVE
NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THE APRTMENT BUT WE KNOW THAT
THE FURNITURE AND PIANO WERE TAKEN AWAY AS DESCRIBED EARLIER.

2.7 When did you leave Austria? (Please indicate exact date, if possible)

I BELIEVE WE DEPARTED VIENNA AUGUST 15,1938 TOOK A
TRAIN TO BREMERHAVEN,STAYED THERE FOR ONE NIGHT IN A
HOTEL WHERE WE WERE WELCOMED AS REGULAR TOURISTS.
THE NEXT DAY WE BOARDED THE OCEANLINER "BREMEN".
WE LANDED IN NEW YORK ON AUGUST 22,1938

2.8 If you did not emigrate directly to the U.S, where did you go first?
(How long did you stay there? Can you give a brief description of your experiences? Was there an immedate reason - apart from the general threat - for your emigration?)

3. THE UNITED STATES

3.1 When did you arrive in the U.S.? (Please indicate exact date, if possible)

AUGUST 22,1938

3.2 Did members of your family emigrate to countries other than the U.S.?
(If so, where? Where do they live today? Are you still in contact with them?)

ONE COUSIN EMIGRATED TO ISRAEL(THER PALESTINE) WHERE SHE DIED A FEW YEARS AGO. TWO MALE COUNSINS WERE TRANSPORTED TO SWEDEN WHERE THEY NOW LIVE. WE ARE IN FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THEM. ANOTHER COUSIN EMIGRATED TO ENGLAND WHERE SHE DIED A FEW YEARS AGO.

3.3 Did you serve in the U.S. Armed Forces or in any other allied army?
(If so, when did you join? What division? What was your area of operation? When were you discharged?)

ENTERED US ARMY FEBRUARY 1944 AFTER BASIC TRAINING IN TEXAS, I JOINED THE 106th DIVISION IN ATTERBURY,INDIANA. WE WENT OVERSEAS IN OCTOBER 1944, shipped to the CONTINENT IN NOVEMBER where WE WERE PLACED IN WHAT WAS CONSIDERED A QUIET SECTOR FOR A GREEN DIVISON IN THE ARDENNES FORREST.

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE STARTED ON DECEMBER 16,1944. I was teken PRISONER OF WAR AND SENT TO STALAG IVB after TWO WEEKS ON THE ROAD AND IN BOX CARS. THE RUSSIANS LIBERATED US APRIL 1945 . WE REJOINED THE AMERICAN FORCES AFTER ESCAPING FROM THE RUSSIANS IN JUNE 1945, returned to the STATES THE END OF JUNE, SENT TO JOIN AN OUTFIT IN VIRGINIA AND DISCHARGED DEECEMBER 22,1945.

3.4 Please list places and dates of residence in the U.S.
(City, State; in bigger cities, neighborhood)

PHILADELPHIA,PA. 1938-1956
WILLOW GROVE,PA. 1956-1986
PHILADELPHIA 1986 to present

3.5 Please describe your occupational situation after your arrival in the U.S.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, VOCATIONAL TECH SCHOOL
AFTER MILITARY SERVICE: TEMPLE UNIVERSITY BS,MA
+ 30 CREDITS
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA 1950to 1989
TEACHER,COUNSELOR,VICE PRINCIPAL, ACTING PRINCIPAL

3.6 Did you belong to any emigrant/immigrant-related organization or cultural association? (e.g. Austrian American Federation, Austrian Forum, etc.? If so, since when?)

WE WERE HELPED BY HIAS THE FIRST WEEK WE ARRIVED
NO ORGANIZATIONS SINCE

3.7 Do you still speak German in the USA? If so, with whom and when? How often?

I HAVE TWO FRIENDS WHO ATTENDED SCHOOL IN GERMANY SO WE OCCASIONALLY SPEAK GERMAN. I HAVE NEVER STOPPED SINGING IN GERMAN- SCHUBERT,SCHUMANN,LOEWE ETC.

3.8 Would you call yourself religious? To what degree? What is your affiliation? Did it change?
(Do you keep kosher, go to synagogue, observe the holidays,...?)

WE OBSERVE MOST HOLIDAYS AND BELONG TO A CONGREGATION WHERE I TAUGHT FOR TWENTY FIVE YEARS.TO BE EXACT WE BELONG TO THE SAME SYNAGOGUE WELL OVER FORTY YEARS.

3.9 Were your friends and acquaintances mostly German-speaking or non-German-speaking? Mainly Jewish or not?

I DO NOT RECALL GERMAN SPEAKING FRIENDS .
FRIENDS WERE MIXED BUT MOSTLY JEWISH

3.10 Of what country (countries) are you a citizen? When was each citizenship granted?

USA 1944

3.11 Have you ever visited Austria after the war? If so, how often?
(What did you do there? Can you recall some of your impressions during these visits? Have you ever thought of going back permanently?)

in 1953 and briefly in the Alps in 1999
In 1953 WE WENT AS TOURISTS, STILL A TIME OF OCCUPATION AND STILL A TIME WHEN AUSTRIANS COULD NOT ACCEPT THEIR GUILT AND SPOKE OF COMPLETE DENIAL OF WELCOMING HITLER TO AUSTRIA AS WE SAW AFTER MARCH, 1938

4. PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS

4.1 Have you ever been interviewed by any other organization?
(If yes, please indicate when and by which organization?)

GRATZ COLLEGE ABOUT 1990 WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN MY EXPERIENCES AS PRISONER OF WAR

4.2 Have you ever been mentioned in any historical works?
(Holocaust-related literature, Documentary films, Exhibitions etc.)

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER,JANUARY 13,2003
Playbill of the Philadelphia Orchestra FEBRUARY 2003

5. FAMILY MEMBERS

5.1 Spouse (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

ADELE M.KORNFELD (LEVIN) PHILADELPHIA,PA. MAY 6,1930

RETIRED

5.2 Mother (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

MARGARET KORNFELD BORN VIENNA OCTOBER 15,1891
DIED JUNE 27,1985
secretary

5.3 Father (Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

ERNST KORNFELD JUNGBUNZLAU,CZECHOSLOVAKIA
AUGUST 25,1878
DIED JULY 23,1935
BUSINESSMAN

5.4 Siblings (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

HELENE ALTSCHULER (KORNFELD)
JULY 15,19,1922 BORN VIENNA
RETIRED

5.5 **Children** (Name, Maiden Name, Address [City, State, Country], Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

DAVID KORNFELD BORN PHILADELPHIA 9/5/57
1184 QUARRY COMMONS DRIVE
YARDLEY,PA. 19067
OCCUPATION: FINANCIAL ADVISER

ROBERT KORNFELD BORN PHILADELPHIA 12/10/59
5019 CHERRY BLOSSOM CIRCLE
WEST BLOOMFIELD,MICHIGAN 48324

OCCUPATION: BUSINESSMAN

ANNE R.WESTROM (KORNFELD) BORN PHILADELPHIA !@?%?¢@
313 STORMFIELD DRIVE
HARLEYSVILLE,PA. 19438
OCCUPATION:HOUSEWIFE FORMERLY TEACHER

5.6 **Grandparents** (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth, place/date of death, Occupation[s])

IGNATZ GOTTFRIED
ANNA GOTTFRIED
BERTHOLD KORNFELD
JENNY KORNFELD

The Austrian Heritage Collection is always looking for people to interview.

If you know any Austrian-Jewish immigrants in the US who might be interested in participating in this project, please either ask them to contact us or write their addresses below.

Thank you very much for participating in this project.

(1) Abschrift.

17. Feb. 1936

GRUND NUMMER 0021917

Stempel 10.000 Kronen

Geburts-Zeugnis.

Von dem Unterzeichneten wird hiemit bestätigt, dass laut Geburts-Protokol der israelitischen Kultusgemeinde in Wien, 1925 Reihezahl 341

Hans Berthold Kornfeld

am 5. Februar 1925 fünften

Februar Eintausendneunhundertfünfu.zwanzig

als ehelicher Sohn des Ernst Kornfeld
und der Margarethe geb. Gottfried

in Wien, XIX., Billrothstr. 78 geboren wurde.

Wien, am 21. Juli 1925

MATRIKELAMT DER
ISRAELITISCHEN KULTUSGEMEINDE
in Wien.
Unterschrift unleserlich
beeideter Matrikelführer.

Matrikelamt
der
Israelitischen
Kultusgemeinde
in
Wien.

Kollationier.

10.000 Kr.

(2)

Republik Österreich.

Bundeshauptstadt Wien.

Nr. III-K 80/49

Heimatschein,

womit bestätigt wird, daß

Name Hans Kornfeld

Charakter oder Beschäftigung —

Alter geb. 5. 6. 1925 in Wien

Stand —

in Wien das Heimatrecht besitzt und in der Gemeindematrik Bez III - 25-57/49 eingetragen erscheint.

Eigenhändige Unterschrift der Partei:

Hans Kornfeld

Vom magistratischen Bezirksamte für den III. Bezirk
im selbständigen Wirkungsbereiche.

Wien, am ..... 19....

Für den Bürgermeister:

Magistratisches Bezirksamt f. d. III. Bezirk * Wien *

Neugebauer

Reiche

Druck der Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei in Wien. (St.) 8138 25

BUNDESREALSCHULE in WIEN, III. Bez.,
Radetzkystrasse 2,

Katalog-Nr. 23 (5) Schuljahr 1935/36

Halbjahrsausweis

für

Konjera Hans, Schüler — der ersten

Klasse der Realschule.

Betragen: sehr gut

Verbindliche Lehrgegenstände	Leistungen
Religion	sehr gut
Deutsche Sprache	gut
Französisch – Italienisch	genügend
Geschichte	gut
Geographie	gut
Naturgeschichte	genügend
Chemie	—
Physik	—
Mathematik (mit geometrischem Zeichnen)	genügend
Zeichnen	genügend
Schriftpflege	
Kurzschrift	—
Gesang	gut
Turnen	gut

Freigegenstände	Leistungen
Handarbeit	genügend

Der / Die Schüler ..... hat an den Unverbindlichen Übungen: .....

.....

.....

teilgenommen.

Wien, am 15. Februar 1936.

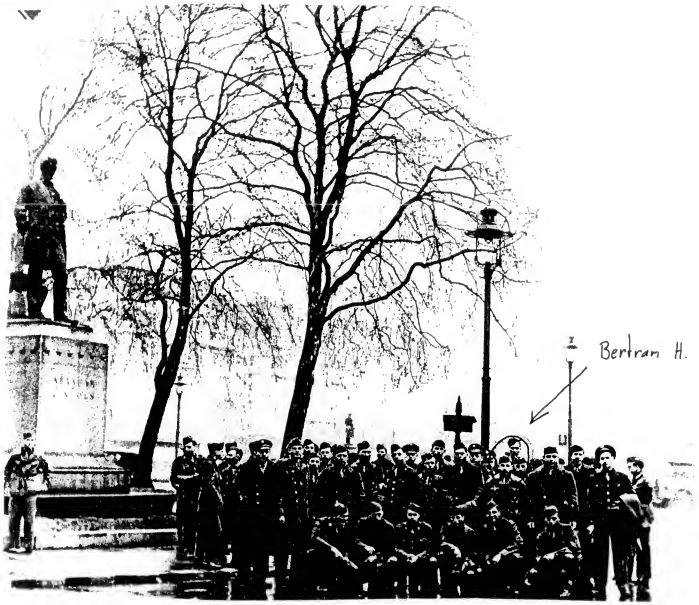
Franz Schubert
Direktor.

K. Prosta
Klassenvorstand.

Bundesrealschule im 3. Bezirke in Wien

Notenreihe				
Betragen:	sehr gut	gut	entsprechend	nicht entsprechend
Fortgang:	sehr gut	gut	genügend	nicht genügend

(9)



(8)

(3)

Voranzeige!

Die nächste Vorstellung im Schüler-Abonnement I. Zyklus findet

Sonntag, den 3. April 1938 statt

Zur Aufführung gelangt:

„Der Barbier von Sevilla“

Beginn 2 Uhr nachmittags

(4)

Friends and Relatives killed during Hitler. 1941-1945.

On I wrote to Viktor and Minnie in Bratislava to send me all the necessary information for affidavits, since we heard that Hitler will invade Tschechoslovakia, I got the answer, don't worry about us "es geht uns gut". There last letter was October 16, 1941. My letter from November 25, 1941 came back Faststamp New York July 24, 1942. Red Cross answered to my request they were send to Poland with Transport No.....and never heard from them.

Mathilde Matzau, my sister in law was sent to Minsk Poland and went to death.

My sister in law's parents, Leopold and Anna Diamant were killed. They lived in Tyrnau, Tschecho Slovakia.

Irma Bernfeld, my sister in law was killed.

Anna Strauss, my best friend, was killed, when she went to Tschechoslovakia, to help her father.

Fritz Strassni (Stiassni) an Actor, died in Theresienstadt.

Also 2 cousins, Minka and Minka.

Cousins, whole familie Axelrod. Never heard from them.

Dr. Egon Schick, who delivered Kelly and Bert committed suicide by cutting his wrists and died in Rekawinkel in a Sanitorium.

Dr. Popper, the pediatrician, had a nervous breakdown. The familie moved to Tschechoslovakia.

My friend Grete Zinkler and husband.

Honda, my sister in law's sister.

Sophie Tenzer, a cousin, and her brother Ernst who was in Theresienstadt, Never heard from them.

Mr. and Mrs. Buschnitz. They played bridge with my husband until he died.

Miller, Bahnhofstrasse-Quartier, ?

Malu Mautique and husband, my cousin were in a concentration camp in Hungary and escaped over the border.

Dante Nunes, Aci and Agi escaped from Presov to Bratislava, where he got a job at the Legio. His mother was hiding and just before Hitler got invaded, we received a telegram from Switzerland. They were saved.

Mr. Robert Fleischner, his wife, Gisela, and son Walter, who had to leave Vienna at the certain time, received permits from my cousin Judith Deutsch in London in time to be saved.

Many more were killed, but I don't remember them.

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My dearest Papa, August 16, 1938 on board the Bremen

So that you are completely informed about everything, here is a detailed report. First of all, I must explain that everything is very well organized and that all our great fears were without ground... Everyone is polite and friendly. However, there are very few refugees on board . The boat is beautiful, our cabin is small and not an outside cabin. The children love it. Promptly at noontime today the boat started moving, then the rain began and it is still raining and cool. In Bremen I was able to do some shopping. On the boat we have easy chairs and the food is wonderful and more than plentiful. We had a big chicken dinner at noontime with dessert, then they showed the move "Habanera" then we had afternoon tea with all kinds of cakes, and for supper either chicken or cold cuts after an appetizer and dessert. I am surprised that we find room for it all in our stomachs. The children eat like pigs. Mr. & Mrs. Mahler are very pleasant company. Tomorrow morning there will be swimming, excercises, whatever our heart desires. It all seems very strange, I feel like we are in a different world and cannot understand all the (horror) we left behind.

Wednesday August 17, 1938

The night was comfortable and we slept well. The landing in Southampton was very interesting, beautiful sunshine, but very windy. Hansl and Mr. Mahler have been exploring every corner of this large boat. There is not a spot they have not examined. If we keep going the same way, we can gain 10 kilogram on this boat. For the noontime meal we worked our way through 6 courses, 15 courses were available. In the evening at 5:30 P.M. we will land in Cherbourg, where this letter will be mailed to you. Then I will not be able to mail anything until we get to N.Y. I wish I could get news from you in Cherbourg. As you see we are taken care of fabulously and we have no idea what is happening in Vienna. We have no newspapers and cannot get any news any other way either. Everyone here is in a good mood. Oscar, please let me know right away about today's happening (in court) ? What is new with you. How do you feel, dear Papa. Please send detailed news. I have to close so that the letter can go out. All the best and thousand kisses to you all and greetings to all our friends who ask for us.

signed, Grete, Helly and Hans.

Thursday August 18, 1938 S.S. Bremen

My dearest Papa

I write daily so I can tell you everything. We are very well and have not been seasick and hope not to ever be on this trip. Yesterday was very interesting, especially the landing in Cherbourg, where the boat became fully occupied. They were mostly Americans, all very elegant, making Austria disappear completely. We don't hear Vienna or Austria even mentioned. Everything seems unbelievable to us and all the experiences make us feel stupid. Yesterday we turned the clock back 2 hours and today again. The trip is now very uninteresting, the weather bad and on the deck very windy. Nothing but water everywhere. However, we will soon be in the gulfstream where the weather is supposed to be better. I will go swimming with Hansl and the Mahlers in the afternoon. We are mutually happy that we are on the same boat. We also eat at the same table. Only our cabin is very small, Hansl sleeps in the top of the bunk bed and we leave the door open at night to get a little more air. Otherwise we feel as if we are in a resort. The day begins at 7 A.M. with a wake-up call, then we take a bath and go for breakfast. For instance this is what Helly ate this morning: honeymelon, orange juice, scrambled eggs with ham, teae, bread and butter, honey, and jellies ,etc. At 10A.M. is a strong broth and small sandwich breads. Hansl just loves them. The printed menus are fabulous and everyone can order any and everything. The water is especially good and every pitcher has ice in it. The children are now playing Ping-Pong. Library and elevator are here for our use. Yesterday we were in the luggage storage room 7 floors under water, because we needed some things from our big suitcase, which is too big to keep in our cabin. I am still sorry that we did not ask you to write to us to Cherbourg. The people are all very accommodating. We have a cabin neighbor, a

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gentleman from New York, originally from Germany, who has gone back and forth 21 times. He watches over the three of us and is helpful where he can. We still cannot grasp all the things that have happened to us and that all that is even possible. Tomorrow, I will continue.

Friday August 19, 1938

Today isa most critical day. The sea is really rough. At 7:30 A.M. everyone left their cabins in a great rush, to go up to the promenade deck and stay there. ~~95x~~ 90% of the passengers are seasick. It is terrible. Hansl is affected the most, Helly is much better. They are serving just a little something on the deck for all the sick people. It seems to me like a very diffcult Yom-Kippur. My problems are more headaches than upset stomach.

Now it is 5:45 P.M. the clock gets moved backwards daily. The sea and the people seem to be calmer, the sun is out again and the sky and the sea are a beautiful blue. The mood of everyone is good again. More tomorrow, hopefully without the boat shaking.

Saturday August 20, 1938

It is hard to believe that we are on this boat for 5 days already. Yesterday was terrible. There were ropes everywhere to hold on to, but even with that it was difficult to walk. In the evening it was better and we slept well. All day it was very cold, during the night while traveling through the golf stream, terribly hot. The sea is still a little rough, but the big boat does not shake and we really appreciate that after yesterday. The appetite also is back. The weather is not good. At times the fog is so heavy that we cannot see the ocean. We have pleasant company and the children also found playmates. We swim in the morning and have a movie in the afternoon. I sometimes feel this is all a dream. The personnel on this boat is unbelievably nice. Tomorrow we have to start packing as we will arrive in New York on Monday at noon. Today we had a guided tour through the entire boat, very interesting. I will try to write tomorrow again Please write to us as much as possible.

Sunday August 21, 1938

A few more lines before mailing this letter. Today makes amends for the bad days we had. There is not a cloud in the sky. The ocean and the sky are dark blue. Everyone is on the deck and sunburned, but pleasantly. We have to finish packing. In the evening will be a big farewell dinner. The time really went by quickly and for the most part very pleasantly and to our great satisfaction. Only hope things will continue that way in the new country. The next news comes from New York. Again thank, greetings and many kisses, your Grete

8/22/88

New York and Philadelphia, Helen and Ralph were waiting for us at the boat. They recognized us right away. Helen says she is very happy to have us here and says she wants to be like a sister to me. Ralph and Helen are so kind that it feels as if we have been with them for a long time. Rudi (Ralph) has an unbelievable resemblance to ~~Ralph~~ Helen looks very young. This is written in a great hurry on the way to Philadelphia as we want to mail it as soon as possible.

In great haste greetings and kisses,, Grete

This is a P.S. from the translator. Helen did not stay nice very long. On the way from New York to Philadelphia, we stopped to eat and she right away criticized our European eating habits. She also complained about Hansl Jewish looks and told us that in Upper Darby where they lived, people did not know that they are Jewish. That picking went on for the next four days. On Friday Helen took us to the Council of Jewish women, and Mother got a job as a housekeeper, I was invited to live there too and Hansl got a room next door with a neighbor. We never went back to Upper Darby and Ralph who was at work had not idea that we would be gone when he comes home from work. He seemed to enjoy our being there, but Helen was jealous. Things sure were not pleasant for us for the next few years, but since this is supposed to be a happy party, we will not talk about

that unpleasant time in our new country.

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WESTERN UNION

1901 (19).

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
DL=Day Letter
NL=Night Letter
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

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PT 224 42 GOVT= WASHINGTON DC 17 755P 1945 APR 17 PM 9 21

MRS MARGARET KORNFELD=
4314 NORTH BROAD ST PHILA=

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR SON PFC KORNFELD, BERTRAM H IS A PRISONER OF WAR OF GERMAN GOVERNMENT BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED THROUGH PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL FURTHER INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE FURNISHED BY PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL=

J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

4/17 9:40 A.M.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET
THAT YOUR SON PRIVATE FIRST CLASS BERTRAM H KORNFELD HAS
BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE TWENTY ONE DECEMBER
IN GERMANY IF FURTHER DETAILS OR OTHER INFORMATION ARE
RECEIVED YOU WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED=

DUNLOP ACTING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATR 'G ITS SERVICE

WESTERN UNION 1201

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
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NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

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1945 MAY 30 PM 9 09

WT256 22 GOVT=W UX WASHINGTON DC 30 642P

MRS MARGARET MORNFELD=

4814 NORTH BROAD ST PHILA=

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR SON PFC KORNFELD D B RETURNED TO MILITARY CONTROL DATE UNREPORTED=

J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

...APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRON ...ITS SERVIC...

6/20 11:45A

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WESTERN UNION

(40)

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS

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LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

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PT358 41 GOVT=WUX WASHINGTON DC 20 1016P 1945 JUN 20 PM 10 41

MRS MARGARET KORNFELD=

4814 NORTH BROAD ST PHILA=

THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY DIRECTS ME TO INFORM YOU YOUR SON PFC BERTRAM K KORNFELD IS BEING RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE AND WILL BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU UPON ARRIVAL=

J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

CLASS OF SERVICE

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WESTERN UNION

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

1220

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

1950 SEP 28 PM 6 52

...ding time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

PA682

P.LLA544 LONG GOTVT PD=WUX PHILADELPHIA PENN 28 629P=

MRS MARGARET KORNFELD Get 516

4814 NORTH BROAD ST GV PHILA=

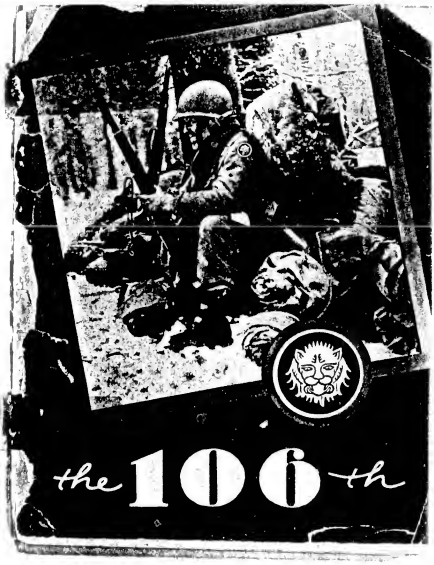
281930Z FROM AGPR DASH FOX SIGNED WITSELL TAG REFERENCE YOUR LETTER TO SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND REFERRED TO THIS OFFICE PD AUTHORITY TO GRANT DELAY IN CALL TO ACTIVE DUTY HAS BEEN DELEGATED TO CHIEFS OF MILITARY DISTRICTS AND AUTHORITY TO ACT ON APPEALS RESTS WITH ARMY COMMANDERS PD SUGGEST YOUR SON IMMEDIATELY SUBMIT APPLICATION FOR DELAY TO CHIEF CMA EASTERN PA MILITARY DISTRICT CMA ROBINSON BUILDING CMA 42 SOUTH 15TH ST CMA PHILADELPHIA CMA PA FOR CONSIDERATION UNDER RPVOSIONS ARMY REGULATIONS 135 DASH 230=

WITSELL THE ADJUTANT GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF ARMY

WASHINGTON DC=

281930Z 42 15 135 230=

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE


the 106th

When the history of the Ardennes fighting has been written, it will be recorded as one of the great strategic Allied successes of the war in Europe. Tactically, for the 106th and the other American divisions involved, it was a bitter and costly fight. But it becomes increasingly clear that the Germans expended in that last futile effort those last reserves of men and materiel which they needed to badly a few months later. The losses and sacrifices of the 106th Infantry Division paid great dividends in eventual victory.

These pages are dedicated to those gallant men who refused to quit in the darkest hour of the Allied invasion, and whose fortitude and heroism turned the tide toward overwhelming victory.

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 106th INFANTRY DIVISION

DEC. 16, 1944: Springing from the bleak vastness of the Schnee Eifel with the speed of a coiled snake, Field Marshal von Rundstedt's desperate but mighty counter-offensive struck toward Belgium and the Ardennes. Carefully hoarded Panther and Tiger tanks, followed by crack, battle-tested infantry, launched the last-chance gamble aimed at shattering the taut lines of the US First Army, seizing the

cities of Liege and Antwerp and slashing through the Allied forces to the sea.

The full force of this massive attack was thrown against the new, untried 106th Infantry Division which had gone into the front lines for the first time only five days previous. Two regiments, the 422nd and 423rd, with the 589th and 590th FA Bns., were cut off and surrounded by the sheer weight and power of the concentrated German hammer blows. The 424th Regt. was driven back. The 106th Recon Troop, 331st Medical Bn., and 81st Engr. Combat Bn. suffered heavy casualties.

But, despite the vulnerable 27-mile front which the division had to defend, despite inadequate reserves, supplies and lack of air support, the valiant men of the Lion Division took a tremendous toll of enemy shock troops, wrote a story in blood and courage to rank with the Alamo, Château-Thierry, Pearl Harbor and Bataan. They never quit. Said Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery:

The American soldiers of the... 106th Infantry Division stuck it out and put up a fine performance. By jove, they stuck it out, those chaps.

At St. Vith, first objective of the German thrust, the 106th held on grimly at a time when every hour of resistance was vital to the Allied cause. The 106th doughs fought against superior forces, with pulverizing artillery battering them from all sides; it was men against tanks, guts against steel. Their heroism gained precious time for other units to regroup and strike back. In one of the bloodiest battles of the war, the 106th showed the Germans and the world how American soldiers could fight—and die.

When the terrific German onslaught was launched the 106th had only been on the Continent 10 days. The men had made a three-day road march from Limésy, France, to St. Vith, Belgium, in rain, cold and snow. In the five days they had been in the line there had been little rest.

They landed at Le Havre from England, Dec. 6. Next day, in the dim half-light of dawn, troops piled into open trucks while a cold, drizzling rain fell. Some of the men laughed and made cracks about "Sunny France." Others cursed the rain, the cold, the fate that had sent them to battle-scarred Europe. Still others said nothing.

In the clump of trees off to one side of the road stood what once had been a pretentious country chateau. It was decayed and rotten now. Bomb-cratered ground and the shell of a fire-gutted house gave evidence of what had passed. In a field across the road lay broken remains of an Allied bomber. It

looked alone and dead; there was the feeling that someone ought to bury it. The scene was one of dreary foreboding.

Trucks roared over pitted, rough roads toward St. Vith, through towns and battered remnants of villages; past burned skeletons of tanks and trucks in roadside ditches, around battlefields of World War I. People came out to smile, wave and make the V sign with their fingers. The men smiled back and made the V sign, too.

As the long convoy wound through the mountains of eastern Belgium and Luxembourg, men saw the snow-covered evergreens and thought of Christmas, only a short time off. Then they stopped thinking about that because they remembered where they were and why they had come.

Arriving at St. Vith the night of Dec. 10, the division went into the line the next day. It relieved the veteran 2nd Inf. Div. in the Schnee Eifel, a wooded, snow-covered ridge just northeast of Luxembourg.

This was a quiet sector along the Belgium-Germany frontier. For 10 weeks there had been only light patrol activity and the sector was assigned to the 106th so it could gain experience. The baptism of fire that was to come was the first action for the 106th. For many of its men it was the last.

PANZERS *Strike*— 106TH STICKS IT OUT!

ASSIGNED to VIII Corps, the 106th took up positions in a slightly bulging arc along a forest-crowned ridge of the Schnee Eifel approximately 12 miles east of St. Vith.

The northern flank was held by the 14th Cav. Gp., attached to the 106th. Next, in the easternmost part of the curve, the 422nd held the line. To the 422nd's right, swinging slightly to the southwest, was the 423rd and almost directly south was the 424th. Beyond the 424th, on the division's southern flank was the 28th Inf. Div. St. Vith was 106th HQ and the rear echelon was in Vielsalm, about 12 miles due west.

The little road center of St. Vith had seen war before. It was through St. Vith that the Nazi panzers rolled to Sedan in 1940; German infantry marched through it in 1914. But it never had figured as a battleground such as it was to become in this fateful December of 1944.

During the night of Dec. 15, front line units of the 106th noticed increased activity in the German positions. At 0540 the enemy began to lay down a thunderous artillery barrage.

At first, fire was directed mainly against the northern flank sector of the 14th. Slowly the barrage crept

southward, smashing strongpoints along the whole division front. Treetops snapped like toothpicks under murderous shell bursts. Doughs burrowed into their foxholes and fortifications, waited tensely for the attack which would follow.

The darkness was filled with bursts from medium and heavy field pieces plus railway artillery which had been shoved secretly into position. The explosions were deafening and grew into a terrifying hell of noise when Nazis started using their nebelwerfer "Screaming Meemies."

Full weight of the barrage was brought to bear on the 589th FA Bn., supporting the 422nd. Hundreds of rounds blasted their positions in 35 minutes.

At 0700 the barrage lifted in the forward areas, although St. Vith remained under fire. Now came the attack. Waves of Volksgrenadiers, spearheaded by panzer units, smashed against the division's lines in a desperate try for a decisive, early breakthrough. They were stopped. A second attack was thrown against the division. Again, 106th doughs held. Nazis threw in wave after wave of fresh troops, replacing their losses. There were no replacements for the 106th.

Lionmen settled to their grim business, dug deeper, fought with everything they had. German bodies piled up, often at the very rim of the defenders' foxholes. Still the Nazis came.

All during the day the attacks mounted in fury. Hundreds of fanatical Germans rushed straight toward

the American lines, only to be mowed down or driven back by a hail of steel. Others came on, met the same fate. The deadly, careful fire of the stubborn defenders exacted a dreadful toll on the Wehrmacht.

Finally, under pressure of overwhelming numbers, the 14th Cav. Gp. was forced to withdraw on the north flank, giving the Germans their first wedge in the division front. Enemy tanks and infantry in increasing numbers then hacked at the slowly widening gap in an effort to surround the 422nd.

In the meantime, a second tank-led assault, supported by infantry and other panzers, hammered relentlessly at the 423rd and 424th. Early next morning a wedge was driven between the two regiments. This southern German column then swung north to join the one that had broken through in the 14th's sector. The 422nd and 423rd were surrounded. The 424th pulled back to St. Vith.

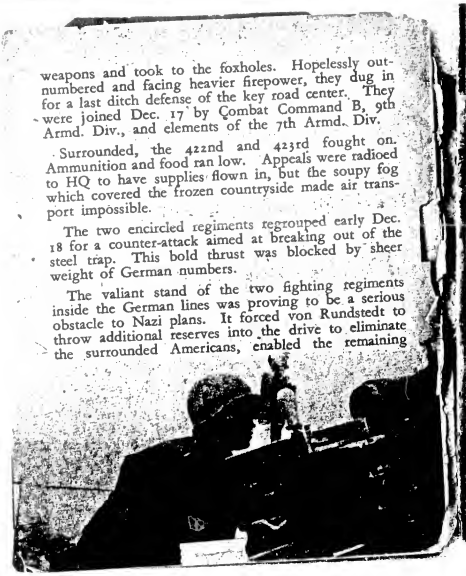
The Nazis were headed for St. Vith. There, cooks and clerks, truck drivers and mechanics shouldered

weapons and took to the foxholes. Hopelessly outnumbered and facing heavier firepower, they dug in for a last ditch defense of the key road center. They were joined Dec. 17 by Combat Command B, 9th Armd. Div., and elements of the 7th Armd. Div.

Surrounded, the 422nd and 423rd fought on. Ammunition and food ran low. Appeals were radioed to HQ to have supplies flown in, but the soupy fog which covered the frozen countryside made air transport impossible.

The two encircled regiments regrouped early Dec. 18 for a counter-attack aimed at breaking out of the steel trap. This bold thrust was blocked by sheer weight of German numbers.

The valiant stand of the two fighting regiments inside the German lines was proving to be a serious obstacle to Nazi plans. It forced von Rundstedt to throw additional reserves into the drive to eliminate the surrounded Americans, enabled the remaining



units and their reinforcements to prepare the heroic defense of St. Vith, delayed the attack schedule and prevented the early stages of the Battle of the Bulge from exploding into a complete German victory.

Low on ammunition, food gone, ranks depleted by three days and nights of ceaseless in-fighting, the 422nd and 423rd battled on from their foxholes and old Siegfried Line bunkers. They fought the ever-growing horde of panzers with bazookas, rifles and machine guns. One of their last radio messages was, "Can you get some ammunition through?"

Then, no more was heard from the two encircled regiments except what news was brought back by small groups and individuals who escaped the trap. Many were known to have been killed. Many were missing. Many turned up later in German prison camps.

Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges, First Army commander, said of the 106th's stand:

No troops in the world, disposed as your division had to be, could have withstood the impact of the German attack which had its greatest weight in your sector. Please tell these men for me what a grand job they did. By the delay they effected, they definitely upset von Rundstedt's timetable.

Germans kept probing toward St. Vith all during the night of Dec. 17-18. Then, as daylight came, they renewed their furious and relentless attack. North of the town, 7th Armd. Div. elements were in position.

To the south were the 424th and CC B, 9th Armd. Div. Dug in along the highway to the east were Div. HQ Defense Platoon, 81st Engr. Combat Bn., and the attached 168th Engr. Combat Bn.

A mighty see-saw battle churned over the entire area during the next three days. Raging at the unexpected snag in their plans and aware that precious hours were being lost with every delay, the Nazis unleashed repeated fanatic attacks along the whole, thin perimeter of the defenders. Time and time again they were thrown back.

WOUNDED LIONS *Claw* NAZI JUGGERNAUT

FEATS of individual gallantry and courage against long odds were legion. Men alone and in little groups fought their way out of the surrounded units. For days, soldiers made their way back through enemy lines. Some fought with whatever outfits they found.

During the early hours of the Nazi assault, the 423rd I & R Platoon, under 1st Lt. Ivan H. Long, Pontiac, Mich., effectively held a road block. The Germans, learning at great cost that they could not smash through the block, went around. The platoon was faced with the alternative of surrendering or making a dash through enemy territory. The men were without overcoats or blankets. Among the 21 doughs were only four D-ration chocolate bars. They had little ammunition. But they fought their way through the snow and gnawing cold to rejoin the division with every man safe.

Cpl. Willard Roper, Havre, Mont., led the group back as first scout. After 72 hours of clawing through enemy patrols, tank and machine gun positions, the exhausted and footsore men, some of whom had lost their helmets, could still grin and fight.

One of the most noteworthy efforts at St. Vith was the leadership of Lt. Col. Thomas J. Riggs, Jr., Huntington, W. Va., commanding the 81st Engr. Combat Bn. Once a midshipman at the US Naval Academy, Col. Riggs first won fame as an All-America fullback at the University of Illinois.

On the morning of Dec. 17, Col. Riggs took over the defense of the town. He disposed his limited forces, consisting of part of his own battalion, the Defense Platoon, 106th Hq Co., and elements of the 106th Cavalry, and waited for the coming blow. The [illegible] soon a battalion of German infantry [illegible] Tiger tanks. Time [illegible] more

tanks and infantry tackled the engineer line, probing for a weak spot. During these attacks, Col. Riggs was in the center of the defense, rallying his men and personally heading counter-thrusts to keep the enemy off balance.

Col. Riggs was captured while leading a patrol in the defense of St. Vith. Marched across Germany, he escaped near the Polish border and made his way to the frontier. He was sheltered three days by civilians and then joined an advancing Red Army tank outfit. After fighting with it for several days, he was evacuated to Odessa and from there was taken to Marseilles. He rejoined the 81st in the spring when it was stationed near Rennes, France.

Ruthless concentrations of German artillery, armor and infantry were thrown against the 81st on the eastern approaches to St. Vith. In the meantime, the Headquarters Defense Platoon was making a heroic stand in an attempt to protect the CP.

Cpl. Lawrence B. Rogers, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Pfc Floyd L. Black, Mt. Crab, Ohio, both members of the platoon, along with two men whose identity never was learned, successfully held a vital road junction against three Tiger tanks supported by infantry. With a machine gun, rocket launcher, two rifles and a carbine, the four-man volunteer rear-guard stopped the advancing force. They held the enemy at bay for two and a half hours, retreating only when their machine gun failed to function.

Lt. Edward R. Withee, Torrington, Conn., 81st Engr., volunteered for what seemed to be a suicidal mission. His platoon was pinned down in a house near Schonberg by four enemy tanks. All were doomed unless escape could be made while the enemy's attention was diverted.

Withee attacked the four tanks and the supporting infantry armed only with a sub-machine gun. His platoon withdrew safely. When last seen, Withee was pouring fire into German infantry. He was listed as missing in action until April when he turned up in a PW camp. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

There was the magnificent bluff of 220-pound

Capt. Lee Berwick, Johnson's Bayou, La., 424th. He talked 102 Germans and two officers into surrendering an almost impregnable position to a handful of men. He boldly strode to the very muzzle of enemy machine guns to warn of the "huge force" supporting him and ordered the senior officer to surrender. It worked!

As the relentless drive of the Nazi juggernaut ground in on the surrounded units, many men and small groups made desperate attempts to cut their way out. A number were killed or captured, but a few made it. Two who succeeded were 1st/Sgt. Wallace G. Rifleman, Green Bay, Wis., and Capt. Edward H. Murray, Cabin Creek, W. Va., both of Co. G, 423rd.

With several others, the pair started for the American lines under cover of night. There was a bridge over the Our River guarded by three Germans—by-passed; guards in an enemy motor pool and radar station—killed in a gun fight; German guards on a building—silenced in hand to hand combat; two Germans who rose from foxholes to try to bar their way—liquidated. Encounters with an enemy tank, a German artillery crew, and a close escape from a heavily armed combat patrol sent out to track them down rounded out the adventure.

Sgt. Rifleman won the Silver Star for gallantry in action in a subsequent battle.

Enemy artillery fire on the second day of the attack damaged a mortar base manned by Pfc Harry V. Arvanitis, Moline, Ill., 424th. He resumed fire, holding the

tube between his legs and aiming by hand. After firing about 50 rounds, he saw a squad of Nazi infantrymen creeping toward his position.

Training the mortar on them, he shot his last 30 rounds of ammunition, killing or disabling eight of his attackers. The other four rose to their feet and lunged at him in a bayonet charge. Arvannis and his assistant gunner emptied their service pistols, stopping three of the four. The fourth was upon them, bayonet gleaming.

Pfc Arvannis threw his four pound revolver at the German, hitting him squarely in the forehead and killing him instantly.

Heroes UPSET VON RUNDSTEDT TIMETABLE

THERE are stories, too, of units that fought and served in the face of overwhelming odds: the 106th QM Co., 106th MP Platoon, 106th Signal Co., Division Band and 331st Medical Bn. Each received the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

Despite intense enemy artillery and small arms fire, the MP Platoon kept traffic flowing and performed other duties all during the German counter-offensive. At St. Vith, when shelling by the enemy was at its heaviest, the men at the traffic posts were forced to

take a prone position, but they stuck to their posts and directed traffic. During this critical period, over 700 PWs were handled by the platoon. When St. Vith finally fell to the enemy, all remaining PWs were marched to Vielsalm under cover of darkness. This operation was accomplished without the loss of a prisoner.

Members of the platoon conducted ammunition trains over routes which were under constant artillery fire. They helped "stragglers" to get back to their own units and into the fight. They reconnoitered roads, planned road blocks, crippled an enemy tank, destroyed an enemy staff car with its officer occupants.

The 106th QM Co., composed almost entirely of New England personnel, found itself partially surrounded at times, and had to depend on the ingenuity of its men to get the supplies through.

The ration shortage was becoming critical in Vielsalm Dec. 19 due to the enemy advance and destruction of supply depots. Twelve QM trucks set out to find a depot still open. Rations and gasoline were located at Dinant, Belgium. For security, the trucks made the 35-mile return trip in two serials. The first arrived in Vielsalm on the 20th. The second ran into a furious tank battle near St. Hubert, detoured, avoided destruction and got through to Vielsalm with all supplies intact.

As the fury of the battle mounted, maintenance of communications became literally a matter of life or death. Skill and courage of signalmen of the 106th

Signal Co. and in the regiments kept the vital communication lines open whenever it was humanly possible.

Again and again through the whole division sector, trouble shooters made emergency repairs on lines severed by artillery fire. For signalmen, field splices under enemy small arms fire became almost commonplace. New lines frequently were laid through territory teeming with enemy patrols.

While the town of Schonberg was under heavy bombardment by the Germans, four men of the Signal unit stayed at their switchboard while the building in which they were located was blown down around them. A shell ripped off the rear of the structure. Another reduced the right side to rubble, and the roof collapsed as a third shell tore into the structure. Still the men stayed at their post.

A fourth shell landed behind the switchboard, wounding two of the operators. They destroyed the board and withdrew only when ordered to leave by a superior officer, after German infantry had entered the town in strength as the barrage lifted. These men were T/5 Seymour H. Zorn, New York City; T/5 James R. Leonard and Pfc Donald A. Allen, both of Pittsburgh, and Pvt. Archie L. King, Muscatine, Ia.

Medics of the 106th also distinguished themselves in the bloody Ardennes. One was T/5 Marshall W. Walker, Tryon, N. C., who made repeated trips by jeep through German-held territory near Winterspelt to evacuate 424th wounded.

Capt. Philip J. Antrim, Wichita Falls, Kan., 424th battalion surgeon, found that deep snow, rough terrain, roving enemy patrols and the number of casualties prevented litter bearers from bringing wounded to his aid station fast enough. He packed equipment on his back, went forward to treat men where they had fallen. Capt. Antrim received the Bronze Star and was decorated for two other heroic deeds in the next five weeks.

Men of the 331st Medical Bn. also followed the "Service Above Self" motto. Collecting Cos. A, B and C, supporting the 422nd, 423rd and 424th, respectively, treated and evacuated the wounded so efficiently that Clearing Co. D had only six deaths among all wounded treated in the Ardennes campaign. Co. D functioned for three days and nights as a field hospital in the Vielsalm area, although completely surrounded.

Two other units of the division won praise for a difficult job well done: the 806th Ord. Co., which worked under trying conditions, and the 106th Div. Band, which fought as infantry in the defense of St. Vith. Dec. 19-21, the 112th CT, 28th Inf. Div., on the 106th's right flank, was cut off from its own division. CT 112 was attached to the 106th Div., and with the 424th, held against German attacks south of St. Vith.

424TH *Lashes Back* AT MANHAY

THE fall of St. Vith became inevitable late Dec. 21. All units of the 106th and 7th Armd. withdrew to form a perimeter defense west of the town and east of the Salm River. These positions were held against renewed attacks next day.

Orders were received on the 22nd from XVIII Corps (Airborne) to withdraw farther to the west. The 82nd A/B Div. was moving into positions along the Salm River and a line running west from Salm Chateau. Elements of the 106th, the 7th and 9th Armd. Divs. were to move back to the northwest through new lines formed by the paratroopers.

Careful planning and leadership enabled the units to pull back under constant enemy infantry and tank attacks. The successful withdrawal across the two remaining routes over the Salm River was completed by night of the 23rd.

It was at the start of the withdrawal across the Salm that Maj. Gen. Alan W. Jones became a casualty and was evacuated to a hospital in Liege. Brig. Gen. Herbert T. Perrin, Asst. CG, assumed command.

That night and next day the weary, battle-bruised survivors of the first week of the Ardennes breakthrough took their first respite from battle. Without blankets, with barely enough rations, and unable to light fires

for warmth, they dug in on a windswept hill in the vicinity of Werbomont, Belgium.

Sixteen hours later, on the coldest Christmas Eve in the memory of Belgians, the 424th launched the first counter-attack of the Bulge at Manhay. This heavily fortified junction on the St. Vith-Houffalize Highway was the northern pivot point of the German penetration into Belgium. It was to be another bloody battleground for the 106th.

Gen. Eisenhower wrote Gen. Perrin:

The magnificent job you are doing is having a great beneficial effect on the situation. I am personally grateful to you and wish you would let all your personnel know that if they continue to carry out their mission with the splendid spirit they have so far shown, they will have deserved well of their country.

Securing the main road to Manhay, 2nd Bn., 424th, crossed open ground to the edge of town under intense shelling. It pushed into town, then was forced to withdraw. Christmas Day, the battalion punched its way into town again and held on against furious resistance by the First SS Panzer Div. and Volksgrenadiers. Manhay was one of the significant turning points of the Ardennes battle. It, too, was a story of valor.

When Co. E's advance was halted by intense machine gun fire, S/Sgt. John F. Goidesik, Chicago, advanced alone with a 60mm mortar and destroyed the enemy position with three rounds, permitting his company to advance.

Sgt. Richard J. Maslankowski, Chicago, cradled a .30 caliber light machine gun in his arms and advanced to wipe out an enemy machine gun nest. The gun jammed; he repaired it under fire, pressed on to kill the enemy gunners with his last burst of ammunition.

Capt. Glynn Salyers, Somerset, Ky., commanding Co. H, 424th, was wounded while leading his men across an open field. He refused medical attention until the objective was won and all his wounded men were cared for.

When his platoon of Co. K, 424th, was pinned down by fire from an emplaced machine gun, Sgt. (then Pfc) George S. Vasquez, St. Paul, Minn., located the gun, went forward with his M-1 and wiped out the Nazi position single-handed.

Co. C, 424th, was held up by three enemy tanks. Robert Honaker, Scarbro, W. Va., led a bazooka team which destroyed one tank and repulsed the others. Honaker later earned a battlefield commission and a Silver Star.

The 106th pressed south and east. The 1st Bn., 424th, met serious opposition in front of Coulee where the enemy was dug in on a strong and deep defensive line. Fighting was fierce, losses were heavy. While the 424th attacked to the front, engaging the main strength of the defenders, the 517th swept around and cleared the town in a slam-bang action before the enemy could recover and regroup.

After seizing all assigned objectives, the 106th was given the additional mission Jan. 15 of taking the

town of Ennal and high ground to the east. Ennal was held by a strong force of Germans entrenched in houses bristling with automatic weapons.

Two platoons of Co. K, 424th, punched their way into Ennal but were pinned down by devastating enemy fire. Ennal had to be secured by night. Available forces were organized and, as darkness approached, the town was taken by assault and cleared. Gen. Perrin personally led the attack, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The 517th cut the road from Petit-Thier to Poteau on the 16th and by nightfall was on the outskirts of Poteau. But the advance of the 30th and 75th Inf. Divs. pinched off the 106th. The division was then ordered to mop up by-passed enemy troops in the area. On Jan. 22, Gen. Perrin issued the following:

With the withdrawal of the 424th Inf. from the line on Jan. 18, the major portion of the elements of this division completed a period of 34 days of practically continuous close combat with the enemy. Our artillery is still engaged. The events of that period are still fresh in your minds and in those of your men. The physical hardships endured, the constant exposure to rain, sleet and snow in freezing temperatures, and on terrain over which it was once considered impossible to wage effective warfare, have, so far as I know, rarely, if ever, been demanded of soldiers of any nation. Those twin enemies—weather and terrain—have been our greatest problems, for certainly, wherever we have met the German, we have found that he is in no sense

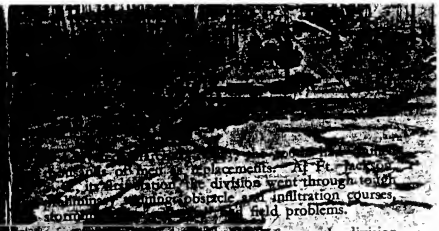
our equal. You and your men have met those demands and overcome them by a stubbornness of will, a fixed tenacity of purpose, and a grim and determined aggressiveness of body and spirit. You have accomplished your missions, and no higher praise can ever be spoken of any military organization.

106th HAS RECORD OF VALOR AND HONOR

After a rest, the 424th CT joined the 7th Armd. Div. in the mission all Lionmen had been waiting for: to retake St. Vith.

The 424th struck southeast on Jan. 25 from a point just north of St. Vith with the objective of securing the main highway running through Amel to the northeast. A coordinated infantry-tank attack dislodged a main enemy outpost at a road junction. By late afternoon, in the face of automatic weapons, 88mm guns and small arms fire, doughs cleared the town of Medell. The following morning Meyerode fell to the furiously attacking 106th. The 7th Armd. then seized St. Vith while the 106th took Neidenberg and Born.

The 106th now was back at the line where it had first met the enemy. It had taken fierce punishment but had come back in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war—a proud achievement for a division that had a history of less than two years.



[illegible] replacements. At Ft. Jackson, [illegible] the division went through tough [illegible] mine, obstacle and infiltration courses, [illegible] field problems.

[illegible] winter maneuvers of 1944, the division learned to fight in terrain and weather which resembled the rugged, cold Ardennes. Maneuvers over, the 106th moved to Camp Atterbury, Ind., for seven months of advanced training. Its unit commanders were prepared for the trying days to come.

The 106th left the States in mid-October, spent several weeks in the South Midlands of England, raced across France and Belgium into the line under the command of Maj. Gen. Jones.

Feb. 28, 1945: Maj. Gen. Donald A. Stroh now was in command of the division. Lionmen, after a short rest, were back in the line on the south flank of First Army near the Belgian town of Hunnigen. For three weeks they had patrolled and probed the thickly-

sown mine fields to find a weak spot in the pillbox's concrete gun emplacements, dragon's teeth and anti-tank obstacles of the Siegfried Line.

Facing the 106th was a division identified as one which had been in the attack on St. Vith. With the memory of the breakthrough still vivid, Lionmen sought vengeance. They got it.

Co. C, 424th, wit', combat engineers from Co. A, 81st Engr. Bn., knocked out a large, particularly troublesome Nazi pillbox. The team clawed its way under machine gun and rifle fire, over four rows of anti-personnel mines and up to the very walls of the fort. Germans in foxholes outside the pillbox were killed or driven off. Fire from the embrasures was silenced by flame throwers, rifle grenades and bazookas.

Pvt. Dennis A. Wartigun, Kearny, N. J., Co. A, 81st, approached the eight-foot thick walls and with a long pole, pushed a charge of TNT through an opening. The blast cracked the walls, blew open the door, killed three of the defenders. Doughs rushed in

to capture nine other Germans who needed no further persuasion to surrender.

Slowly, methodically, pillboxes fell. A week later, the 106th was well on its way through the Siegfried Line heading toward the Rhine. Fighting on the southern flank of V Corps and First Army, the 106th was in contact with Third Army to the south.

Led by 3rd Bn., 424th, Lionmen wrested Frauenkron from the enemy. Driving through fields of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, the 424th crossed Lemert Creek, seized the towns of Berk, Kronenburg and Baasem, as it advanced toward its objective along the Simmer River.

Other divisions of V Corps started to swing to the southeast as the Siegfried Line was breached, pivoting on the 106th. Third Army continued to drive to the east, and the division was pinched out. After mopping-up operations, the 106th was pulled back to Corps reserve and the 517th was relieved from 106th control.

Assigned to Fifteenth Army, the division moved to St. Quentin, France, late in March. After a brief stay, it moved to Rennes, France, where reinforcements were brought in and the 422nd and 423rd Regts., along with the 589th and 590th FA Bns., were reconstituted. For the first time since the division had gone into the line, it was up to full strength. A strenuous, tough training program was started for the reconsti-

tuted units at Rennes and later resumed at Coetquidan, France.

While at Rennes, 3rd Inf. Regt., 159th Inf. Regt., Aleutian veterans; and 401st and 627th FA Bns. were attached to the division. The 106th now was not only at full strength, it had a surplus—a far cry from the dark final days of December when the 424th and a few attached units were the division's only force.

An impressive ceremony was held April 14 at the St. Jacques airfield near Rennes. Survivors of the original 106th regiments lost in the breakthrough presented their colors to the new members of the 422nd and 423rd.

While the division stood at "present arms" on the parade ground, commanders, with the old and new color guards armed with German rifles captured in the Battle of the Bulge, advanced to the center of the field where they exchanged salutes. Colors and guidons were then presented to the new color guard. When the units reformed, the augmented division of five

regiments and six artillery battalions passed in review before Gen. Stroh.

A similar ceremony on a smaller scale was held later in Germany by the 424th. During the hectic see-saw battle in the early days of the Ardennes breakthrough, the regiment lost its colors. After V-E Day, a medic of the 2nd Inf. Div., then moving into Czechoslovakia, recovered the colors from a German prisoner and sent them back to the 106th. The colors were presented again to the 424th in an impressive ceremony.

While in the Rennes area, the 106th constituted the reserve for the 66th Inf. Div. and French units containing the strong German garrisons on the coastal area of St. Nazaire and Lorient.

Plans were being made to relieve the 66th but orders came through for the division to return to Germany. Leaving the reconstituted units to complete their reorganization and training, the 424th, 3rd and 159th Regts., with other units, raced across France to corral the thousands of prisoners being taken in the final drive through Germany.

Spread out along both flanks of the Rhine from Holland to Switzerland, the 106th was reinforced to a strength of 40,000. Approximately, 1,500,000 PWs passed through 106th cages.

It was a big job: receiving, screening, processing and discharging the hordes of former German soldiers. But it was a job the 106th relished; many of the Germans

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